

NCC Workforce Program Grads Finding Jobs, Despite The Economy



Tyrie Dawson selects his tools at DCH Montclair Acura in Verona.

When Tyrie Dawson was completing his course requirements for NCC's Youth and Adult Automotive Training Center program, he was not that optimistic he would find a job, given the current state of the economy.

But he was hired to work at DCH Montclair Acura in Verona, New Jersey, weeks before he even officially graduated in February. He was not alone. Marvin Adrichem, another student from the program, was hired as an entry-level mechanic at Firestone down the road in Montclair.

Both Dawson and Adrichem said the fact that their certificates are backed by Ford Motor Company, which also helps financially sponsor the program, made a big difference when they went job-hunting.

"I love my work," Adrichem said. "I

did a lot of research of which school to attend and the New Community program by far was the most hands-on. They don't sacrifice academic quality, but just make sure you have the real world experience you will need to function on the job."

They are not alone. Two students who graduated from the NCC School of Culinary Arts in March have also landed jobs—in the kitchen at New Community's Extended Care Center. Kelvin Johnson and Ernest White both assist in breakfast and lunch set-up for the residents of Extended Care, a 180-bed skilled nursing facility owned and operated by New Community Corporation.

"We are getting a lot of good experience that will prepare us for the future," said Johnson.

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COMPASSION

"How far you go in life depends on your being tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving and tolerant of the weak and strong. Because someday in your life you will have been all of these."

George Washington Carver

"Make no judgments where you have no compassion."

Anne McCaffrey

"You know, there's a lot of talk in this country about the federal deficit. But I think we should talk more about our empathy deficit -- the ability to put ourselves in someone else's shoes...when you choose to broaden your ambit of concern and empathize with the plight of others, whether they are close friends or distant strangers -- it becomes harder not to act; harder not to help"

Barack Obama

"The purpose of life is not to be happy. It is to be useful, to be honourable, to be compassionate, to have it make some difference that you have lived and lived well."

Henry Fielding

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NCC Nursing Home Rated Excellent On Quality Measures

When it comes to quality measures, New Community's Extended Care Center has achieved a five-star rating in this important category on the latest "Nursing Home Compare" public reporting site operated by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

The set of quality measures are included for each nursing home that participates in Medicare or Medicaid. These measures are derived from resident assessment data that nursing homes routinely collect on their residents at specified intervals during their stay. The measures assess the resident's physical and clinical conditions and abilities, as well as preferences and life care wishes.

Among the quality measures looked at are the percentage of residents who are given flu and pneumonia shots during their stay and the percentage of long-term residents who appear more depressed or anxious.

According to officials of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, the primary goal in launching this rating system is to provide residents and their families with an easy way to understand assessment of nursing home quality.

Betty Lawson, the administrator of New Community Extended Care Center, a 180-bed skilled nursing facility, said the overall rating of three stars achieved by her center on the Nursing Home Compare site make it comparable to many nursing homes located in the surrounding suburbs of Essex County. The overall rating is a combination of the health inspection, staffing and the quality measures rating.

"Just like when you check into a three-star hotel, there are certain things you come to expect, like clean and comfortable accommodations and courteous ser-

vice," she said. "We are quite pleased that not only were the quality measures at Extended Care found to be excellent, but our facility was overall found to be on par with some of our competitors in the more affluent suburbs who also achieved a three-star rating. We aim to achieve even higher."

Diane McCann, who was admitted to Extended Care following a stroke last fall, credited the excellent nursing care and rigorous rehabilitation she received at New Community's facility with getting her back on her feet again.

"They can't do enough for you," said McCann, 60. "I'm just glad I have a clean bill of health and things are back to normal."



Corie Brock, a participant in New Community Corporation's Adult Medical Day Care, enjoys the arts and crafts programming. Here, she is shown painting the word "Love" during a project undertaken in celebration of Valentine's Day. The Adult Medical Day Care is located in New Community's Extended Care Center.

Social Investment

- New Community Corporation remains focused on continuing to meet the needs of inner-city residents, despite the economy. We continue to serve----
- Children in day care, pre-school, and after-school programs
- Senior citizens who require services such as home health, wellness care and meals-on-wheels
- Unemployed in need of job skills and life skills to survive
- The housing needs of low and very low income residents
- NCC Family Service clients enrolled in marriage and family therapy to address issues such as domestic violence (this service helps hundreds who are in crisis throughout the year)

New Community's Family Resource Center Top Agency In Helping With Utility Bills



When you are a senior citizen living on a fixed income, paying utility bills can be a real challenge. Carol Smith, 74, found that out this winter, as her furnace seemed to be working overtime during several weeks of cold, frigid weather.

"I had economic hardships just trying to keep up," said Smith, who was juggling utility bills and other expenses, such as taxes, on her modest home.

It was through her sister that Smith learned where she could turn for help. Smith filled out an application at New Community Corporation's Family Resource Center on Bergen Street in Newark.

The Family Resource Center is one of 250 agencies statewide working in conjunction with NJ SHARES, a non-profit established in 1998 by the state's leading utility companies and agencies to help those struggling with utility costs.

Last year, The Family Resource Center processed 1,359 applications for energy assistance – the highest amount of households assisted by any one agency in the entire network of agencies working with the NJ SHARES program.

Smith, of East Orange, received \$700 to help with the cost of oil and \$300 to take care of her electricity bill through NJ SHARES.

"Thanks to New Community's Family Resource Center and NJ SHARES, we have been able to stay

warm this winter," said Smith.

In the current recession, Family Resource Center director Joann Williams-Swiney said the help provided through the program has been extremely important to both individuals and families.

"Because of the present economy, people are tightening their belts and they can't afford the basic essentials these days. They need a lot of help, especially during the winter season and we're happy the resource center was able to provide it," she said.

According to Barbara Gomes, director of outreach and communications for NJ SHARES, the agency has had a "long-standing and successful working relationship with New Community, as well as the NCC Family Success (Resource) Center."

"Moreover, we have a great respect for the work that NCC Family Resource Center has done throughout the state of New Jersey. New Community's Family Resource Center, in collaboration with NJ SHARES, provides valuable assistance to the community at large," Gomes said.

In addition to providing help paying electric bills, the NJ SHARES program also assists with paying natural gas, electric oil, propane, water and telephone bills.



During a listening experiment called "Water Music" at NCC Community Hills Early Learning Center, Liana Zempare, left, and C'wan Merritt take turns tapping a spoon on each of three glasses of water—filled to high, medium and low. They discovered that each glass produced a different tone depending on how much water was inside.

Tracey Battles



I was hooked," he said.

Battles joined New Community Corporation two years earlier, in 2006, when he was brought on board as Director of Special Programs for the Education Department.

"I will never forget my first day in the door and I already

had three reports that were due that very week," he recalled. "All I can remember is wanting to pick up my briefcase and go home. Despite the daunting task, however, I was able to get through it."

In his role with the Education Department, Battles was specifically responsible for two programs--- Even Start, which focuses on family literacy, and S.E.S. (Supplemental Education Services), which provides supplemental education services, such as tutoring, for schools in need of improvement.

"In a period of three years, the program increased from 32 students

to 175 students and 90 percent of students were able to perform well on the state standardized tests," he said.

Before joining NCC, Battles served as director of the Office of Black Catholic Affairs for the Archdiocese of Newark and prior to that, as a parliamentary aide to Diane Abbott, the first black woman elected to the British Parliament. Currently, Battles serves as the pastoral associate at Our Lady of Queen of Angels Roman Catholic Parish in Newark.

Battles loves his current work, saying no two days are the same when it comes to finding resources to support New Community programs.

"My work at NCC has been an exhilarating experience," he said. "Working in resource development has been a wonderful opportunity to help New Community fulfill its broader mission of helping individuals improve the quality of their lives. And when you meet the people who have benefited from the services, it makes all the effort really worth it."

Battles and his wife, Stacey, are the proud parents of three foster children, Al-Hammed, Aliem, and Nyla Bell. The family resides in Plainfield.

As New Community's Resource Development Manager, Tracey Battles has learned to be creative when it comes to looking for funding to support the network's many programs.

"In this economy particularly, you really have to think out-of-the-box when it comes to the resources that can be tapped," he said. "It takes more research and leg work."

Battles, 36, has been working in resource development since 2008, when he was first asked by NCC chief of staff, Kathy Spivey, to take a leading role with the grants team.

"What started as one grant turned to three and the next thing I knew

Workforce Program

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Meanwhile, Rafiyya Welton, 21, of Newark, a graduate of New Community's ShopRite Training Program, started work recently at the Hillside ShopRite, where she is a cashier.

"I like working with the customers

and learning new things everyday," she said. "Everyone is friendly."

Like past graduates of the ShopRite program, Welton came to the Hillside store well-trained and ready to go to work. The store is one of 13 ShopRites throughout central and northern New Jersey where graduates are placed.

"We are so proud of how well graduates of the New Community Partners in Training, ShopRite Training Program are doing," said Claudette Goode, the program instructor. "When they leave here, there is no doubt they are well-equipped and ready to start work. The feedback we receive is very positive."

OUR MISSION

To help residents of inner cities improve the quality of their lives to reflect individual, God-given dignity and personal achievement.